# Trdat

**(r. 394 - 406)**

## BRIEFING

**Trdat** (Georgian: თრდატი, sometimes Latinized as *Tiridates*), of the Chosroid Dynasty, was the king (*mepe*) of Iberia (Kartli, eastern Georgia) from c. 394 to 406.

According to the Georgian chronicles, he was a son of Rev II, son of Mirian III, the first Christian king of Iberia and Salome. Trdat's brother was Sauromaces II of Iberia. He is reported to have succeeded, already in an advanced age, his relative and son-in-law, Varaz-Bakur II, and to have been forced to pay tribute to the Sassanids. The chronicles praise his piety and credit Trdat with the construction of churches at Rustavi and Nekresi. The church founded by Trdat at Nekresi is identified by the archaeologist Nodar Bakhtadze with a ruined basilica uncovered in 1998.

## BIOGRAPHY

The primary historical source on King Trdat is the medieval Georgian chronicle “Kartlis Tskhovreba”. However, the name of this Iberian ruler is absent from most of the king lists, where he is replaced by Bakur, mentioned in the work “Conversion of Georgia” as a king of the late 4th to early 5th centuries.

According to the chronicles, Trdat was the son of Rev II, the eldest son of the first Christian king of Iberia, Mirian III. Trdat's mother was Salome, daughter of King Trdat III of Greater Armenia. Prince Trdat was named after his grandfather.

Rev died shortly before his father, and after Mirian's death in 360, Trdat's elder brother, King Saurmag II , a supporter of rapprochement with Byzantium, ascended the throne of Iberia. However, after his death, the throne was taken by Trdat's son-in-law, Varaz-Bakur III, a supporter of an alliance with Sasanian Iran. During his reign, Trdat, relying on military assistance from Greater Armenia, attempted to stir up a rebellion to overthrow his son-in-law, but the introduction of Sasanian troops into Iberia forced the rebels to reconcile with the king.

Only after the death of Varaz-Bakur I in 394 was Tiridates able to ascend the throne of Iberia. This occurred due to the minority of the deceased king's sons, Pharsmanes and Mirdates, who were given to be raised by one of the Iberian princes. Chronicles report that, despite his advanced age, Tiridates was a prudent and prudent ruler, distinguished by his meekness and wisdom. Thanks to these qualities, the new king managed to remove from his dominions the Persian army, which had been in the country since the time of his predecessor, and then to conclude an alliance with the Byzantine Emperor Arcadius. Legends also tell of the arrival in Iberia of an emissary of the Western Roman Emperor Honorius. There are also reports of Tiridates' construction activities and the construction of churches in Rustavi and Nekresi.

King Trdat died in 406 after a reign of 12 years. He was succeeded on the throne of Iberia by Pharsmanes IV.